(iv) A Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests, Government of India, for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(v) Export of wild animals and their derivative is prohibited under EXIM policy.

(vi) Ministry of Home Affairs has written to all the State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching all illegal trade in wildlife.

(3) *International level:*

(i) Government of India is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) for control of illegal trade in wildlife items.

(ii) Bilateral agreements have been signed with Nepal and Republic of China for controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife.

(iii) A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to Tiger Conservation.

Forest cover in Kerala

*191. SHRI. C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the forest cover in Kerala during the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the forest cover in that State is decreasing;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether it has been brought to the notice of Government that there are large scale depletion of rain forests in Idukki district of Kerala by way of encroachments;

(e) if so, whether the Central Government have made any independent assessment of this situation;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) According to the State of Forest Report 1999, forest cover in the State of Kerala is 10323 Sq. Km and there has been a decrease of 11 Sq. Km of forest cover over the previous assessment. This has been primarily attributed to harvesting of eucalyptus and rubber plantations.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) and (g) The enquiry reveals that forest lands have been allotted by the State Government without prior approval under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The Central Government has directed the State Government for eviction of all encroachment on Forest lands. The State Government has appointed two Committees one to ascertain the exact extent of encroachment and other to oversee the eviction of all encroachments.

Japanese assistance to clean Yamuna

†*192. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Japan is going to provide financial assistance for Yamuna Action Plan; and

(b) if so, to what extent and by when?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Under the Yamuna Action Plan (YAP) Phase-I of Government, pollution abatement works have been taken up in 12 towns of Haryana and 8 towns of Uttar Pradesh besides Delhi. The approved cost of these works is Rs.711 crore against which an expenditure of which Rs. 655 crore has been incurred so far. A majority of the works of YAP Phase-I have been financed through financial assistance of Japanese Yen 17.77 billion from the Government of Japan. The present physical progress of the works is 95%. A sewage treatment capacity of 750 million litres per day(mld) has been created which comprises 322 mld in Haryana, 398 mld in Uttar Pradesh and 30 mld in Delhi. In addition Govt. of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi has also taken up works of pollution

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.